A

LETTER

TO A

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

ON THE

PRESENT UNHAPPY DISPUTES

BETWEEN

GREAT-BRITAIN AND HER COLONIES.

[Price One Shilling.]

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WHEREIN THE

SUPREMACY of the FORMER is Aſſerted and Proved;

AND THE

NECESSITY of COMPELLING the LATTER to PAY DUE OBEDIENCE to the SOVEREIGN STATE, is Enforced, upon PRINCIPLES of SOUND POLICY, REASON, and JUSTICE.

Unum eſſe debet Omnibus Propoſitum, ut eadem ſit Utilitas Uniuſcujuſque & Univerſorum.

CIC. de Offic.

Hear me for my Cauſe. SHAKESPEARE.

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A

LETTER, &c.

DEAR SIR,

THE duty I owe his Majeſty, the love I bear to my Native Country, and a certain public principle which plays about my heart, all conſpire together, and urge me to hazard a few thoughts on American Affairs, at this moſt alarming and important criſis.

I CANNOT promiſe you much novelty of ſentiment, the Preſs having teemed with profound and elaborate treatiſes on the ſame ſubject for ten years paſt; but as the reaſonings of different authors either lie ſcattered thro' a vaſt variety of fugitive pieces, or are blended and intermixed with matter of a foreign nature; and in ſome inſtances, perhaps, are moſt cruelly diſtorted and defaced by an evil party ſpirit, or a rancorous diſlike of thoſe *who chance to guide the helm*; it may not be an unacceptable attempt to reſcue this important ſubject from all incumbrances, and to treat it in a clear and rational ſtile of argument.

FLOWERS of ſpeech and pompous declamation may recommend an Orator to public notice, the generality of men being commonly captivated by *ſounds* and *manner*; but a reader of taſte and judgment ſtands aloof to *tranſports*, and expects a train of ſolid reaſoning to pour conviction on his mind, before he yields his aſſent to any propoſition, or embraces any tenet.

I HAVE frequently obſerved to you, that the repeal of the Stamp Act formed a kind of epoch in the annals of Britiſh ſtory; and tho' I think too liberally to ſuppoſe that the reigning Adminiſtration of that day were influenced by undue motives to promote a dangerous meaſure, yet I muſt be allowed to ſay, that in my judgment our preſent diſtractions principally flow from that *fatal error*. But whether the Stamp Act itſelf, or the haſty repeal of it, occaſioned our diſquiets, are points of mere opinion, and unworthy of much debate.

IT is a nice and perilous experiment for the Powers of Legiſlation to diſcover, at any time, the leaſt ſymptoms of weakneſs or diſtruſt: Public bodies of men can alone give weight and ſtability to their counſels by a firm, ſound, and perſevering ſyſtem. When the people once perceive any impotence in the execution

tion of public meaſures, Government loſes dignity, and ſinks into contempt.

It may ſeem a bold aſſertion, but I am convinced, that it is ſafer to enforce a doubtful or even a pernicious meaſure, than tamely to yield a point, unleſs grounded upon tried experience.

The formality attending legiſlative acts; that awful appearance of deliberation and debate; the ſolemnity obſerved in maturing public buſineſs; and the royal ſanction of his Majeſty to the completion of it; give ſuch an air of conſequence and dignity to the whole, that no caprice, no idle clamours, no ſtate cabals, or party contentions, ought to operate with the leaſt ſhadow of ſucceſs.

When the ſeveral Eſtates of the Kingdom have once eſtabliſhed a Law, nothing on earth ſhould be received to controul it, till the Subjects, by dutiful obedience to its mandates, place themſelves in a fit condition humbly to petition or remonſtrate, as the caſe may require, in conſequence of the real and unaffected evils which they have experienced under a full execution of the Act. Here Juſtice ſhould never call in vain; the ears of our Rulers will not be ſhut againſt the voice of Reaſon; and the merit of obedience on the one hand, powerfully

and conſtitutionally demands relief and pity on the other. In this ſtate of things, the importance of Government is duly preſerved; and conſidering that all communities of men are formed by individuals, who are frail by nature, and at beſt *ſee as thro' a glaſs darkly*; the rays of royalty, and the ſparks of ſenatorial ſplendour, ſhine more bright and illuſtrious, if poſſible, in the moment of repealing an injurious law, and thereby compoſing the honeſt, panting boſoms of anxious millions, than in all the glaring diſplays of authority and power.

But reverſe this ſcene for a moment, and behold the Sons of Violence fired with imaginary evils, impatient of reſtraint, and illegally and wantonly wreſting all power from the hands in which our bleſſed Conſtitution has ſo wiſely placed it. Behold the Civil Powers, in order to avoid a temporary evil, condeſcending to the force of Faction, and forging plauſible expedients to obtain a moment's pauſe; and you ſee, at the ſame time, the bands of Civil Society are thereby looſened, diſorder takes the lead, and conſtitutional dignity is ſwallowed up in the noiſe and fermentation of democratic tumult. The Subject inſenſibly ſlides into outrageous acts bordering upon rebellion; the tone and temper of his mind undergoes ſuch various changes, that, entertaining diſtruſt of his Rulers, and viewing their impo-

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tence and weakneſs thro' the ſame mirror that he eſpies the infirmities of a naked individual, he gradually deſpiſes thoſe he ought to reverence, and yields duty to the ſallies of blind zeal, heightened by a weak and improvident indulgence.

THIS, my good friend, is no picture formed by fancy, or coloured by a warm imagination; but it is a genuine ſketch, a rough draught, as it were, of the progreſs of the human mind, when once permitted to ſtray beyond the juſt limits of decency and order.

THE body politic nay be nervous and relaxed, as well as the human frame; and it is no more poſſible, under ſuch a ſtate, to determine that the ſymptoms may not affect a vital part in the one caſe as well as in the other. The former, indeed, is leſs liable to become diſeaſed and infirm; but if it once contracts the ſame diſtemper, it inſtantly is ſubject to all the concomitant evils flowing from it.

THE haſty repeal of the Stamp Act ſtands as a proof of the ſolidity of theſe reflections; and it has been attended with this additional inconvenience, that it has abſolutely furniſhed the Coloniſts with more than a plauſible argument, that Parliament doubted the extent of its own ſupremacy: for the Declaratory Act

but

but awkwardly heals the wound, inaſmuch as the objections to the Stamp Act ſolely diſputed the power that made it, without bringing into queſtion the inutility, inexpediency, or inefficiency of the Act itſelf; points which could not be regularly handled, unleſs the Statute had been ſuffered to operate and take effect. This capital error evidently generated another inconvenience; for Parliament, no doubt, perceiving that the Declaratory Act was little more than an echo of one paſſed in the reign of King William, found it neceſſary to impoſe certain duties; one of which, at leaſt, ſtands as a mark or evidence of our Supremacy in the point diſputed, and is now the preſent bone of contention between Great Britain and her American Plantations.

You muſt clearly ſee, that the Repeal, which was obtained by clamour, riots, and popular diſcontents, in the firſt inſtance tacitly yielded a dangerous point; confirmed the Coloniſts in a ſettled oppoſition to Britiſh Government; taught them a pleaſing leſſon to direct them on all future occaſions; and at the ſame time entailed a diſpute upon this nation, which might have been otherwiſe happily prevented.

Nothing was ever more evident to me, at the period hinted at, than the urgent neceſſity of enforcing the Act, as it would have fur-

furniſhed the Legiſlature with an opportunity of giving relief, upon truly Conſtitutional grounds, upon experimental evils grievous *to be born*, whereby the matter of Right had been happily ſaved, or rather buried in eternal ſilence.

ANOTHER evil, and not the leaſt, is the waſte of time on the part of this Kingdom; for the Coloniſts have been impoliticly kept in a ſtate of continual training for mine ſucceſſive years. Their Orators have been furniſhed with topics for popular harangues, and the maſs of the people have been taught politics, and the mode of being troubleſome to Government. Nothing but a ſpirit of Independence has been dealt out to the Colonies, till ſwoln with ſelf-importance and flattering conceits, they are now defying, as it were, "*th' Omnipotent to arms!*" and proudly and vauntingly inſulting this glorious Kingdom, her venerable laws, one of the beſt Sovereigns that ever ſwayed the Britiſh ſceptre; and by diſtant threats of deſperate rebellion, bidding defiance to the Supremacy of this Nation, which happily extends its benign influence to the moſt diſtant corners of her wide dominions.

I BEG you to believe, that I do not mean to hint, in the moſt diſtant degree, at the good or ill policy of the Act under conſideration; I only

only wiſh to enforce this plain maxim: That tumultuous counſels ſhould on no ſcore be permitted to controul the legal forms of an eſtabliſhed Civil Conſtitution; that we have the moſt ſerious reaſon to regret the temporizing conceſſions of the year 1766; and that our preſent diſtractions, in a great meaſure at leaſt, ſpring from that unhappy ſource.

THE Noble Lord (whoſe talents and public ſervices cannot be too highly admired) has ſome cauſe to lament, that he yielded his reaſon to oratorical raptures, which made him exclaim, "*That he rejoiced that America reſiſted.*" For my own part, I freely own, that if ſuch words had dropped from me, and obtained the ſame unhappy force and influence as they did from the perſuaſive lips of the Noble Lord alluded to, I ſhould remain as fixed, cold, and petrified, as the marble ſtatues of his Lordſhip, pompouſly erected to celebrate his fame.

THIS Act, however, whether good or bad, odious or expedient, was repealed with a view, no doubt, to conciliate the affections of the Colonies, and to reſtore perfect harmony and friendſhip. Some of the evils I have briefly touched; but I muſt frankly own, that I am not poſſeſſed of materials to enable me to celebrate the manifold advantages which this Country has reaped from lenient and indulgent meaſures.

I, ALAS!

I, ALAS! move in a narrow circle, and have an opportunity only to obſerve the motion of common wheels. The fine and exquiſite parts of the Political Machine are of courſe concealed from the view of men in the humbler walks of life: I muſt, therefore, decline that painful part of American hiſtory which tends to prove the loyalty, duty, and affection of that people. Beſides, I have no acceſs to the papers of the Privy Council, nor any pretence to aſk admittance into the offices of Secretary of State, or the Board of Trade. And thus deprived of authentic evidence, I am utterly unable to ſet forth the many humble Petitions and Remonſtrances the Coloniſts may have preſented to his Majeſty, accompanied with kind and generous offers to raiſe a revenue themſelves, in lieu of Parliamentary taxation. It is not in my power to obtain copies of the *meek* Reſolutions of the ſeveral Aſſemblies on the Continent; nor can I procure even a ſight of any public letters from the reſpective Governors, containing the grateful ſentiments of the people, or their ſoft tenders of love, affection, and regard for their Parent-State. And what is ſtill more ſtrange and wonderful, I cannot even bribe a Crown Officer to furniſh me with authentic copies of ſuch honourable teſtimonials, to enable me to "*vin-*
"*dicate their ways to men.*" This being the caſe, I ſhall leave this taſk to Stateſmen and

Miniſters, who are poſſeſſed of all the evidence, and proceed to conſider the merit of the Coloniſts' pretenſions, and make ſuch general obſervations and reflections, as the nature and importance of the ſubject naturally ſuggeſt.

THE lands in America have been obtained chiefly by conqueſt or treaty, have been peopled from the Mother-Country, and, though no part of it, are, however, dependent and diſtinct dominions, which fall properly under three different claſſes of deſcription: 1. Provincial Conſtitutions, formed under Royal Commiſſions to Governors with ſuitable inſtructions. 2. Proprietary Eſtabliſhments, in the nature of feudatory Principalities: And 3. Charter Governments, or Civil Corporations. And under theſe ſeveral ſpecies of Grants the Sovereignty of the Parent-State has been uniformly ſaved and reſerved: And by 7 and 8 *William III. c.* 22. "all laws, bye-laws, uſa-
"ges, and cuſtoms, which ſhall be in prac-
"tice in any of the Plantations repugnant
"to any Law *made or to be made* in this King-
"dom relative to the ſaid Plantations, ſhall
"be utterly void and of none effect."

THE original Emigrants explored foreign lands under the immediate ſanction and permiſſion of the King; for they poſſeſſed no natural or independent power to commence or proſecute

proſecute ſuch enterprizes. And although ſome antient ſtatutes had been repealed, which too rigidly reſtrained the Subject's free paſſage from one country to another; and though the conſtant practice at this day ſeems to warrant the Subject in departing from the Kingdom at his pleaſure; yet plain and evident as this liberty may ſeem, it is an undoubted fact, that the King may by writ of *Ne exeat Regnum*, under his great or privy ſeal, prohibit him from going abroad; or by writ may command his return when abroad (*a*). Now, let us reflect for a moment what was the real condition of theſe Emigrants at the time of their departure from this Kingdom, and we ſhall find that they were ſubjects of the King, and members of the realm of England, owing obedience to the ſeveral Conſtitutional Powers of the Nation, and to the laws framed and enacted by them; and that they were kindly permitted to depart for their own convenience on proſpects of perſonal advantage.

As, on the one hand, theſe natural-born Subjects had a great variety of rights, which they poſſeſſed by virtue of their birth within the *King's allegiance*, and which they never could forfeit by any diſtance of place or time, but by their own miſbehaviour; ſo, on the other hand, their

(*a*) 1 Hawk. P. C. 22.

allegiance was perpetual at all times, and in the remoteſt corners of the earth: and by the ſame rule, founded in the nature of things, their relation to the ſeveral Powers of that State, from the laws whereof they continued to hold ſuch valuable rights, ſtill ſubſiſted; and they could no more emancipate themſelves from an implied obedience and dutiful ſubmiſſion to the Parliament of Great Britain, than they could renounce or ſurrender their allegiance to the King. The diſtinct duties of theſe emigrating ſubjects were equally univerſal, permanent, and obligatory at all times, and in all places.

The connection between the Crown and the State is likewiſe of ſo intimate a nature, that the former can on no account diſunite itſelf from the latter; neither can it emancipate a Subject from the laws of the Parent State. ---If, then, the Colonies and Mother Country are the *ſame Tribe or Nation of People*, this ſimple conſequence follows of courſe: That *both* muſt be governed by the *ſame Supreme Authority*; *both* acknowledge *one Executive Power* in the King, and *one Legiſlative Power* in the Britiſh Parliament. And if the caſe can poſſibly admit of any other ſpecies of connexion, this abſurdity muſt neceſſarily take place; to wit, That the Coloniſts, who are certainly the legitimate offſpring of this Nation, are by ſome ſtrange

ſtrange magic converted into formal *Allies*; and in the room of being united by blood and the moſt ſacred ties of kindred, they are artificially erected into unnatural Confederacies, ſtrange and diſguſting to a ſerious mind.

CAN any man in his ſenſes ſuppoſe, that the King permitted his Subjects to quit this kingdom to eſtabliſh Plantations in America, and that ſuch an act of gracious indulgence was intended to work any material change in their political condition? much leſs, that they ſhould be excluded from the great community of Britiſh Subjects, and at once freed and diſcharged from all civil connexion with the State? Can any one perſuade himſelf, that the King would connive at a ſeparation of this kind, ſuffer his kingdom to be drained, and afterwards continue his protection and ſupport to a people whoſe children could at any diſtance of time ſet up a legal right to conteſt the authority of thoſe Civil Powers under whoſe laws their fathers were born; by whoſe permiſſion they were allowed to ſeek diſtant regions; and by whoſe care they and their poſterity have ever ſince been nouriſhed and protected?

WHEN the firſt emigration took place, there was a tacit and implied condition on the part of the Emigrants, "*that they would continue*

to

to act, as they would have done, had they remained inhabitants within the realm of Britain;" for it muſt be the very ſummit of error and ignorance in any Nation to tolerate Colonies on any other terms. The Law of Nature and of Nations, the common ſenſe of mankind, and the reaſon of the thing, all concur in eſtabliſhing this doctrine; and one Writer, in particular, is clear and deciſive on this point: " When a Nation takes poſſeſſion of a " diſtant country, and ſettles a Colony there, " that Country, though ſeparated from the " principal Eſtabliſhment, or Mother Coun- " try, naturally becomes a part of the State " equally with its antient poſſeſſions. When- " ever the Political Laws or Treaties make " no diſtinction between them, every thing " of the territory of a Nation ought alſo to " extend to its Colonies." *D'Vattel.*

THIS being a fair and candid ſtate of the caſe between the original Coloniſts and the Parent Country, this concluſion muſt be received as a plain *conceſſum:* That the ſons or poſterity of thoſe Emigrants at this day can claim no rights, privileges, or immunities, but ſuch as their fathers or anceſtors had and enjoyed. They now ſtand in their ſhoes, and conſequently fall by repreſentation into the full poſſeſſion of their rights.

MR.

MR. LOCKE ſays expreſsly, "If the ſons will "enjoy the inheritance of their anceſtors, they "muſt take it on the ſame terms their anceſ-"tors had it, and ſubmit to all the conditions "annexed to ſuch a poſſeſſion." And the ſame enlightened Writer further declares, that by the ſame act whereby "any one unites "his perſon to any State, by the ſame he "unites his poſſeſſions; and they become, "both perſon and poſſeſſion, ſubject to the "government and dominion of that State, "as long as it hath a being."

HAVING thus briefly and plainly pointed out the condition of the firſt Emigrants, by ſhewing that they continued their relation to the Sovereign State, and were a part of the ſame Community, tho' ſeparated by a mighty ocean; the next enquiry muſt neceſſarily be, What alteration or change of their political condition have been wrought ſince their departure, either by grants from the Crown, or by Parliamentary conceſſions.

I WILL be bold to ſay, (becauſe the fact warrants the aſſertion) that the ſupreme power of Parliament has been either expreſly and directly, or tacitly and impliedly, announced in every Grant, Charter, or public Inſtrument, iſſued by the Crown, from the original Settlement of Engliſh Plantations; and if the

Americans

Americans will produce any Records in the face of this poſition, I will take upon me to ſhew them their free and abſolute emancipation from all reſtraints either of King or Parliament, fairly inſcribed, in legible letters, on the back. But no ſuch Records ever were in being; the Miniſters and Stateſmen of this Country, for more than a century paſt, having cautiouſly, and with ſound policy, ſaved and reſerved the Conſtitutional Rights of the Sovereign State. But even granting that every individual Charter has not been penned ſo fully or as accurately as the reſt; nay, allowing for a moment that any Sovereign of this Realm had even granted the claims contended for; ſtill this is certain, That the King could not grant more than he poſſeſſed: And no man who has the leaſt pretence to common underſtanding will dare to aſſert, that the Executive Power can yield or relinquiſh the rights of the Legiſlative. And yet this muſt have been the caſe, and a clear ſurrender made of the whole, or the Coloniſts muſt abſolutely fail in their claim of exemption from Britiſh rule in any caſe whatever.

Let us ſee, in a ſummary way, what the united Powers of the Kingdom have at any time done to weaken their ſupremacy, and that abſolute authority which is veſted in them by indefeaſible right over all the ſubjects

jects of this great and powerful Kingdom, whereſoever they reſide, in the countries and dominions belonging to the Imperial Crown of this Realm.

THE 12th *Car.* II. c. 18, commonly called the Navigation Act (made for the increaſe of "ſhipping, and encouragement of the navigation of this nation, wherein, under God, the wealth, ſafety, and ſtrength of this kingdom are ſo much concerned") ſpeaking of Engliſhmen, and Engliſh ſhipping, explains them to mean, "the men and ſhipping of England, Ireland, Wales, &c. and *America*." And under the terms of this Act, the ſhips and men of *America* have been permitted to enjoy the ſame advantages with *us*; and all ſubſequent Statutes conſider the *Americans* as the ſame people with ourſelves.

THE policy and wiſdom of this Statute cannot be too much reverenced and admired; and being nearly coeval with the eſtabliſhment of our Colonies, evidently ſhews the national opinion, that ſuch Colonies are merely Settlements or Plantations for the advancement of Trade and Commerce. This Act calls to my remembrance the Statute of the 5th *of Richard* II. c. 3 *, which enacts, "That none

* Ann. 1381.

" of the King's ſubjects ſhall carry forth nor " bring any merchandiſes, but only in ſhips " of the King's allegiance:" And this Act having paſſed long before the ſettlement of Colonies, may be conſidered as the firſt Engliſh Act of Navigation, and probably the ground-work and foundation of the famous Navigation Act in 1660. My Lord Bacon obſerves, there are but three things which one nation ſelleth to another; " the *Commo-* " *dity*, the *Manufacture*, and the *Vecture* or " *Carriage*; ſo that if theſe three wheels go, " Wealth will flow as a ſpring-tide*." Now, let any man read 12 *Car.* II. c. 18, and he will find, that the grand object of the Legiſlature was to ſecure the Plantation-trade, and the vecture or carriage of the Commodities from thoſe countries. And hence it is clear beyond a doubt, that the original idea of Colonies was the Settlement of diſtant Territories *for the advancement of Trade and Commerce*. It is therefore manifeſt, that theſe early proviſions indicated a ſpirit of rule and dominion; and being coercive upon the people in the Plantations, in relation to the exportation of their produce (their firſt and moſt important concern), no doubt can remain, that the Legiſlature conſidered them as ſubordinate and dependant parts of the Engliſh Empire, ſubject

* Vol. i. p. 466.

to commercial regulations, and liable to be modelled and governed, in all reſpects, as the wiſdom of Parliament ſhould, from time to time, think proper to direct.

ONE point very obſervable in this Act is, That the Legiſlature viewed the Coloniſts as part of the great Community of this Nation, becauſe the 2d Section provides, that "Aliens "ſhall not exerciſe the occupation of Mer-"chants or Factors in the Plantations;" and both the *men* and *ſhips of America* have under this Statute uniformly enjoyed the ſame privileges in common with ourſelves. But to make this point ſtill more evident, the 15 *Car.* II. c. 7. ſ. 5, expreſſes, that "in regard his Majeſ-"ty's Plantations beyond the ſeas are inha-"bited and *peopled* by his Subjects of this "his Kingdom of England; therefore, for "the maintaining a greater correſpondence "and kindneſs between them, and *keeping* "*them in a firmer dependance upon it*, &c. &c. "and thereby making this Kingdom a ſtaple "not only of the Commodities of thoſe Plan-"tations, but alſo of the Commodities of "other Countries, and places for the ſupply-"ing of them; and it being the uſage of "other Nations to keep their Plantation-"trade to themſelves," enacts, &c.

THE 18*th Sect.* which prohibits the planting of Tobacco in England, calls the Colonies by the emphatical name of *Engliſh Plantations* in parts beyond the Seas; which appellation is certainly expreſſive, that the Legiſlature ever conſidered them as one and the ſame people with ourſelves, and parts and members of the Britiſh State or Community at large.

THE 25*th Car.* II. c. 7, impoſes duties upon the Commodities of the Plantations before they could export them; which is undoubtedly, to all intents and purpoſes, a clear *Revenue Tax.* And if any man will conſult the 7*th and* 8*th William and Mary*, the 11*th William* III. c. 21. 3*d and* 4*th Ann.* c. 5 8*th Ann.* c. 13. the 5*th George* II. c. 7. and 13*th George* II. c. 4 will find the cleareſt traces, and the fulleſt exerciſe of Sovereign Authority and Parliamentary Interpoſition with reſpect to the Plantations, that the wit or ingenuity of man could poſſibly deviſe, or the circumſtances and ſituation of both Countries demand or require. The various Publications with which the Preſs has been crouded for many years paſt, having fully ſtated and obſerved upon the ſeveral proviſions and regulations of theſe Acts; I, therefore, content myſelf with barely naming them in the liſt of evidence in ſupport of the ſupreme authority

ty of this Nation over thoſe diſtant dominions belonging to the Crown of Great Britain.

MANY writers on this ſubject have, in my apprehenſion, greatly miſtaken matters, when they have made a diſtinction between an internal and external tax; for duties laid on American produce before exportation are ſurely a tax, and a freer exerciſe of Parliamentary juriſdiction than a tax on commodities that are not of the growth of thoſe countries: and all the elaborate reaſoning on actual and virtual Repreſentation is, in my opinion, rather foreign to the point in queſtion; which will be much better explained, by aſking only, What are the people in the Colonies? and requiring a plain, unambiguous anſwer.

THE Americans, then, can only be conſidered as Britiſh Subjects, ſtanding in the ſame relation to one Supreme Power in like manner as their fellow-ſubjects actually reſiding within the Realm; and if the Supreme National Aſſembly have not an equal and extenſive authority, in all poſſible caſes where the exerciſe of it may become neceſſary, over the People of both Countries, and their Property and Poſſeſſions, this palpable abſurdity muſt inſtantly occur: That the Americans are not a part of the Britiſh State and Community, and there-

therefore muſt fail in ſupporting their right or claim to the lands they cultivate, the laws they embrace, or the benefits they enjoy in common with ourſelves. But the fact is, that they are part of the Britiſh State, and of courſe are ſubject to the *ſame Supreme Authority*; for two Supreme Powers cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt in the ſame dominions: and if the Coloniſts are independent of the Mother Country *in any one particular*, then muſt this moſt groſs abſurdity, of all others, take place—That there may exiſt in the ſame Empire *two diſtinct and ſupreme Powers*. In every nation there muſt be one unlimited and uncontroulable authority lodged ſomewhere; and there muſt likewiſe be one general univerſal obedience to that Body required of every individual perſon in the empire; and the bare idea of a State without a power ſomewhere veſted to alter every part of its laws, is the height of political abſurdity* .

The grand ſecurity of the Colonies conſiſts in that very dependence which they have been lately taught to diſpute and reject; and nothing can tend more to endanger the happineſs and proſperity of England and America, than contending that they are in any inſtance whatever a diſtinct or ſeparate people.

* Warburton's Alliance, 195.

It is amazing to me, that men of ſenſe can be ſo idle to ſuppoſe that a Nation can have ſubordinate dominions without a power as wide and extenſive as the Empire, for the purpoſe of giving life and vigour to the whole. The very nature of Government requires it; and the neceſſity of ſuch a power ariſes from the number and variety of our Colonies; which being altogether independent of each other, and their reſpective intereſts frequently drawing contrary ways, one common Head is abſolutely neceſſary to direct and guide the whole, and to enforce general meaſures for the good of all. Nay, if ſuch a vital leading principle was wanting in any State, to bind her ſeveral connexions and dependencies together in one cloſe band of union, and to put them in one regular motion on great emergencies, ſuch a State could have little reaſon to pride herſelf in the extent or number of territories, which could at any time counteract and defeat the general counſels of the Sovereign State.

To talk of a Supreme Power, and to ſtrip it of the right of Taxation, is downright nonſenſe; for if the one does not draw the other to it, 'tis an empty name, and a pompous ſhadow. But a Tax is ſo eſſential a part of Government, that it is, in fact, the grand Prerogative of Legiſlation to impoſe it. The

Americans

Americans are complaiſant enough to own, that Great Britain is ſupreme in all points but that of taking money out of their pockets without their own conſent; which is, in ſubſtance, retaining a power in themſelves to render the reſolutions of the Sovereign Juriſdiction of no effect: for if the Supreme Authority can only form plans, and they are to look elſewhere for reſources to compleat them; that Body who raiſes the ſupply indiſputably controuls the other.—And here ariſes a fine ſoleciſm in Politics—An *Imperium in Imperio*; an Inferior veſted with a power to render null and void the acts of the Superior.

No ſuch abſurdities as theſe, thank God, diſgrace our noble Conſtitution, though ſuch notions have crept into the heads of Popular Declaimers. Sovereign Power implies a right of Taxation, and the one cannot ſubſiſt without the other. If the Parliament of England were to yield this point, which is of the very eſſence of Sovereignty, and ſay, that for general purpoſes they could not command the purſes of the Coloniſts, but muſt ſeek for ſupplies from themſelves; this conceſſion muſt operate as a full abdication of the Powers of Government, and a compleat ſurrender of *Supreme Authority*. For let men mince matters as they pleaſe, or put what colours they can upon the ſubject, this is an uncontrovertible fact, That the

Body

Body which in any State has the power of levying Money, is, *ipſo facto*, *Supreme*.

THIS diſpute concerning Taxation ſeems to me to be carried by the Americans to a moſt unreaſonable exceſs; for the fact is, that America has actually been taxed by this Country from the firſt eſtabliſhment of Colonies. We have laid Duties on their own produce before they could export it; we have impoſed Duties on our own commodities, which the conſumers in the Plantations conſequently paid; we have made regulations affecting their property; and, in ſhort, have exerciſed every branch of Dominion over them, ſo far as policy and particular emergencies have from time to time required. Now, what mighty difference does a change of terms make, or a varied mode of Taxation? The ſubſtantial enquiry is, Whether we have taken money out of their pockets by any legal impoſitions? And if we have done ſo in one way, we may do it in any other way which the wiſdom of Parliament may think proper or expedient. I never could underſtand the diſtinction between Impoſt Duties, and internal Taxes; becauſe every Tax impoſed as a regulation of Trade, may incidentally produce a Revenue; and if a Tax has ſuch a two-fold operation, it is, perhaps, a very favourable circumſtance to mark the wiſdom of thoſe who deviſed it.

STRIP the ſubject of all artificial reaſoning; avoid the allurements of ſplendid declamation; withſtand the temptations of party-prejudice, ſtudied and plauſible harangues; and diveſt it of all doubtful, dark, and ambiguous terms; and no propoſition can be more ſelf-evident, or more eaſily reconciled to reaſon and common ſenſe.

THE Coloniſts, indeed, complain that we *tax them without their conſent*. But if this objection is ſolid and ſubſtantial, it muſt hold with equal force againſt every Act of the Britiſh Legiſlature, as well as on the head of Taxes; for it is a fundamental principle of our Conſtitution, that no man is bound by any law to which he does not give his conſent. It is ſufficient to obſerve in this place, that very few perſons in England repreſent many millions; and yet it is as certain that every man in the Kingdom is actually taxed; and the people in America are in no worſe condition, (bating a few local circumſtances which no one can help,) than the four or five millions of perſons in England who neither vote for or ſend Members to Parliament.

THE idea of Repreſentation has been ſo fully diſcuſſed, and proved to be a mere ſpeculative notion, that nothing remains to be ſaid in relation thereto. I ſhall therefore only hint, by the

the way, that Members of Parliament, in conſtitutional language, are not ſtiled the *Repreſentatives of the People*, but *the Commons in Parliament*, as all the old writs, records, and ſtatutes will prove, to the ſatisfaction of any ſober and inquiſitive enquirer.

THE only perſons who can properly be called the *People's Repreſentatives*, are the King, Lords and Commons, as the Grand National Council; but none of them individually or ſeparately fall within that deſcription in the language of our Conſtitution. Under this idea, therefore, theſe combined and ſupreme Powers certainly repreſent every ſubject throughout the King's Dominions, as to all general purpoſes, and as a part or member of one National Community; for the American Parliaments or Aſſemblies are merely for the regulation of the Civil Police and Government of their reſpective Colonies, and cannot poſſibly extend their views beyond the limits of their own juriſdiction; neither can they aſſume to themſelves a right to intermeddle in relation to the general concerns of the State. Theſe different Repreſentations, therefore, are eaſy to be reconciled, when we keep in remembrance the diſtinct offices of each. The Sovereign State ſtands as the grand ſuperintending, all-directing, and uncontrouled Repreſentative of all the Subjects in every quarter of the King's

Dominions; whilſt the minor or ſubordinate Powers of each Colony act in like manner for the local purpoſes of their own particular State.

If this is a juſt repreſentation of the caſe, as I truſt it is, the folly of calling into queſtion the Right of Parliament muſt be equally clear and manifeſt; becauſe, to admit the Sovereignty of the Mother-Country over the Colonies in certain caſes, and to deny them the exercise of a power which is alone the life and ſpirit of it, is *ludere cum ſacris*; for if Sovereignty can in any manner be controuled or counteracted, it is a bubble of air, a ſplendid affectation of ſomething that, in effect, means nothing.

There is ſomething inexpreſſibly ridiculous in the whole conduct of the Americans, about queſtioning the Rights of Parliament in any caſe whatever, inaſmuch as theſe diſtant and ſubordinate parts of the Britiſh Empire thereby aſſume to themſelves a right to explain and limit the nature and extent of the Supreme Juriſdiction. Beſides, new abſurdities ariſe to puzzle and perplex us; for to queſtion the Rights of the Sovereign State, is to oppoſe themſelves as Equals; and where a difference of ſentiment prevails, how muſt ſuch a conteſt be finally decided? If there

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is really a Supreme Power in any State, who can judge of their Rights but *the Power that is Supreme?* The Members of the Community at large have no pretence in reaſon or juſtice to interfere in matters of this nature; for that would be to commence Equals at leaſt, and to wreſt all power from the hands of thoſe where the Laws and Conſtitution had wiſely placed it. Suppoſe then diſputes run high, what muſt be done? No umpire can be called in, as in differences between one nation and another; neighbouring States have nothing to do in ſuch a caſe, theſe being civil diſputes between the Governors and Governed of the ſame State or Empire.—Things being in this ſituation, what can be done when the ſubjects grow impatient of controul, and attempt to diſſolve the Powers of the Conſtitution? There is only one alternative that I can diſcover: The Supreme Power muſt maintain its own Authority, if it has ſtrength to do ſo; or it muſt tamely yield and relinquiſh its rights to the bold invaders who demand them.'

WHAT I conſider, alſo, as ridiculous in the conduct of the Americans is, that they ſhould preſume to diſpute a right which they have not ſtrength to wreſt from us. Power is very often the *ultima ratio*; but to queſtion the rights of Government without the ability to engage in

ſuch

ſuch a conteſt, is the perfection of folly and madneſs.

PACTA CONVENTA can only take place amongſt independent States, and then ſome third Power becomes neceſſary for the purpoſe of ſolving doubts, enforcing obedience, explaining difficulties, and reconciling diſputes between the ſtipulating parties. But who ever heard before theſe days, that dependent and inferior branches of one great Empire ſhould call into queſtion the fundamental powers of the Sovereign State, whoſe exiſtence as ſuch depends altogether upon the poſſeſſion of thoſe very rights and privileges which they ſo arrogantly deny and conteſt?

REMOVE this great badge and characteriſtic mark of Sovereignty, and you tear and rend the Britiſh State into a thouſand pieces. Its own immenſe weight will finally deſtroy it; and our dependencies, thus crumbling from the grand maſs to which they were ſo happily united and cemented, will fall an eaſy prey to the ſeveral Powers which may chooſe to ſcramble for them.

I WILL allow for a moment, that the local circumſtances and ſituation of the Americans deprive them, perhaps, of ſome few advantages under the preſent ſyſtem of Britiſh Repreſen-

preſentation; but will any man ſay, that certain inconveniencies reſulting from diſtance, and divers other cauſes allotted by Providence in the general diſtribution of things, can juſtify the Coloniſts in rejecting a Conſtitution which their fathers were born and bred under, merely becauſe it is *not perfect*; when, perhaps, it may be aſſerted with the greateſt truth, that no Conſtitution equals it on the habitable globe? What was the caſe of certain Diſtricts or Platinates in England before they had a right to ſend Members to the Britiſh Parliament? They were taxed like other people, and patiently ſubmitted till ſome relief could be granted them, upon a humble repreſentation of their caſe in a regular and conſtitutional way.

The Coloniſts purſue a different courſe. They neither propoſe to raiſe a ſum certain in their own manner, nor pray a ſpecial Repreſentation of the Colonies in the Britiſh Senate. They will neither tax themſelves, nor ſuffer us to do it; and they, in effect, deny and renounce Britiſh rule in all caſes, except in ſuch inſtances as relate to their own preſervation and defence. They graciouſly allow us to drive the French from their borders, to give *them elbow-room*; to aid them in critical moments againſt the various tribes of Indian nations that ſurround them; they moſt courteouſly

teouſly receive our fleets to convoy their trade in time of war, and to cover and protect their coaſts; they chearfully lay claim to our laws, becauſe no others equal them; they ſet up their kindred to us, that they may be entitled to the full and abſolute rights of Britiſh ſubjects; but they renounce and totally diſclaim all Britiſh reſtraints, as *yokes* and *burthens* too troubleſome to bear.

THE Coloniſts found their pretenſions upon a ſcore of arguments, and they fly from one ground to another, like the *Indians* from tree to tree.—At one time they puzzle the cauſe by ſtale rehearſals of the *Rights of Nature*, and nothing leſs than a long catalogue of thoſe will give content: And when they find that Britiſh ſubjects, like all others, have abridged, and even relinquiſhed theſe darling rights for the ſweets and comfortable repoſe of ſocial life, away they hurry to *the noble principles of Engliſh Liberty*. Here likewiſe the American finds himſelf perplexed; for if he claims it as his right, he thereby ſtamps himſelf a *Britiſh Subject*. He muſt receive its ſour as well as its ſweet part, in the very condition it is; and he admits, when he accepts it, thoſe very laws in which this *Engliſh Liberty* can alone be found.

ANOTHER contradiction now preſents itſelf to our view, That the Coloniſts ſhould embrace a ſyſtem

a ſyſtem of laws made by thoſe very Powers of the State, whoſe juriſdiction they diſpute; which is at once to admit the juriſdiction, and in the ſame breath alſo to deny it.

HERE, again, they find themſelves ſeverely pinched in point of argument; for every Britiſh ſubject, whereſoever reſident in the King's dominions, muſt look up to one and the *ſame ſupreme State Power*, which is the Britiſh Parliament, whoſe ſuperintendency extends to each individual, and to the minuteſt ſpot of the Britiſh Empire.

THE Americans, with a great ſhew of loyalty and regard, acknowledge his Majeſty to be their rightful Sovereign. And here, as before, they muſt find themſelves entrapped. What Power eſtabliſhed the ſettlement of the Crown of England, and of courſe gave them a King, whom they thus ſo properly acknowledge? Was it not the Britiſh Parliament, whoſe rights they would fritter away by a thouſand ſubtleties and ſenſeleſs evaſions? And can there be a doubt after this, that if Parliament can exerciſe this moſt eminent act of Power and Sovereignty, and fix upon a King to rule and govern them, that they cannot take a few ſhillings out of their pockets for great and general purpoſes, to mature and perfect the grand ſchemes of Public Govern-

ment, and to advance and promote the intereſt of all thoſe who are within the pale of Britiſh Rule?

By what right do the Americans hold their lands, but under the Great Seal of England, or by authority derived from it? Every acre, therefore, which they poſſeſs, is as *parcel of the Realm* of England. And what are the quit-rents which they pay, but ſo many acknowledgments to the Crown for the poſſeſſion of their lands? And in this inſtance they likewiſe pay what is a Tax and Revenue.

In ſhort, America muſt recognize the Legiſlative Power of this Kingdom in its full latitude, or ſet themſelves up as Independent States.

It is very certain, that the diſpute, from its firſt commencement, has wore different complexions; and the Coloniſts were ſome time ago very willing to admit the Power of Parliament for *Commercial regulations:* but the lenity and forbearance of this Kingdom having been miſtaken for timidity, or want of power; and Faction at the ſame time co-operating with their own inclinations; they have vainly conſidered temporary indulgences as evident conceſſions, or, at leaſt, as doubtful ſymptoms of the right of Parliament to bind them in any caſe whatever. Hence it is, they have moved the argument from

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ſtage to ſtage, and at length diſcovered in themſelves a ſtate or ripeneſs for abſolute independence. Thus it was in the commencement of the Civil Wars, in this country, above a century ago: not a man ſuſpected that ſo dire a cataſtrophe as happened would ever take effect; the ringleaders never once meditated a ſcene of ſo tragical a nature. Great ſucceſs in ſtruggles for Liberty, and a continued ſeries of contention for twelve years together, gradually produced ſuch changes and revolutions in men's minds, that in a moment, as it were, they found themſelves ſteeled, and prepared to plunge into any depth, and freely to adopt any deſperate plan of action: and this is the natural progreſs of the human mind, under certain circumſtances, in all ages, and in all countries.

The Americans have now learnt their error in admitting certain rights; and from the delay that has taken place to bring the point to a clear deciſion, they now boldly and openly deny that we have *any power at all.* They oppoſe your laws; compel your officers to reſign their commiſſions; erect new and unheard-of tribunals; call Congreſſes; appoint Committees; make dangerous Reſolves; carry on ſecret correſpondence; connive at illicit and clandeſtine trade; purchaſe goods from your rivals, as far as their ready caſh will extend; and ſupply their other wants by abuſing the indulgence of that body of men, who,

by their generous credit and unexampled generoſity, may be called the Builders of their Towns and Cities, and the Founders of their Opulence and Greatneſs.

THEY prove to us, that it is in their power to unite in oppoſing the operations of our laws, but not in framing and preſenting a dutiful and affectionate Addreſs to the States of this Kingdom, or in making ſome becoming advances, and paving the way for a reconciliation *moſt devoutly to be wiſhed*. They want genius to contrive, and a pregnant wit to deviſe, a plan of conciliating meaſures; they proudly keep aloof; and whilſt we have been cautiouſly adopting lenient meaſures, they have been ſedulouſly employed in projecting our total ruin, and ignominious downfall.

I MUST own, that I have diſcuſſed this ſubject with ſome degree of warmth and freedom; but I truſt you will ſee, that this is no time for blandiſhments, flattery, or improvident concealments. There is an internal heat preying upon the vitals of our bleſſed Conſtitution; and the only conſolation at preſent is, That we are attacked by our Children, in a time of profound peace and public tranquility in Europe.

THE good Providence of God ſeems to afford us in this circumſtance a gleam of hope, that

that by a due attention to, and improvement of, this happy moment, we may be enabled to avert the dangers that ſurround us.

THE weight and conſequence of this ſubject call for the moſt awakened attention of Parliament; and ſo much depends upon the wiſdom and firmneſs of its deliberations, that it may fairly challenge, in point of magnitude, difficulty, and importance, any other ſubject which for 600 years has ever undergone debate in the Britiſh Senate.

IN moſt public deliberations there will be found perſons, who, through caprice, a ſpirit of oppoſition, and ſometimes a diſlike to the reigning Miniſter, will attack any meaſure, becauſe planned by Adminiſtration; and on many occaſions ſuch a proceeding may be matter of pure indifference: But on this great queſtion it is hoped all party ſpirit will be laid aſide; that, however gentlemen may vary in their ſentiments about modes or plans of doing things, they will be united in this opinion, That their own ſupremacy muſt be maintained and ſupported, and ſomething effectually and inſtantly done to put it out of queſtion. This is no period for expedients or temporizing ſhifts; the buſineſs muſt be at once put into a train of final deciſion, or this Kingdom is undone.

I WRITE with no ſpirit of reſentment, but as mym ind is informed; and I ſincerely believe, that my apprehenſions are not extravagant or wild. My love for the Empire at large induces me to offer theſe ſentiments, as well to appeaſe my own mind, as to ſatisfy myſelf that I have caſt my ſmall mite into the common ſtock, at a criſis when the thoughts of different men may be of real ſervice.

LET it be remembered, that when the ancient Romans had occaſion to eſtabliſh regulations in their Provinces, it was not a mob in Italy or Gaul that dictated the terms; it was the powerful thunder of the Forum, and the Capitol of Rome, that bellowed obedience and ſubmiſſion through all the Empire.

I FLATTER myſelf, that ſufficient has been ſaid in ſupport of the Supremacy of this Country, which appears to be founded in reaſon and the nature of things, in the neceſſary relation ſubſiſting between the people of both countries, in uniform practice grounded upon that of other nations in ſimilar caſes; and that our Statutes, as well as Royal Charters, announce this ſupreme right, or clearly reſerve it. And I think it is equally evident, from the long catalogue of inſults offered to this Nation, that the Coloniſts, (to ſpeak in the pious and humble words of the Confeſſion of our Holy Church) " *have done*

" *thoſe*

" *thoſe things which they ought not to have done,*
" *and have left undone thoſe things which they*
" *ought to have done.*"

In this place it may not be altogether foreign to conſider, how it has happened that the Americans are chargeable with ſuch ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion; for I have ſo much charity to believe, that they muſt inwardly feel their boſoms lean to this Country, whoſe offspring they are. It is morally impoſſible that their hearts can be ſo flinty and obdurate, but the *ſoft ſtill voice* of Natural Affection muſt whiſper a few gentle aſpirations! Oh! there is a powerful eloquence in Human Nature that will not be reſiſted, though faction and clamour, impatience and reſentment, may ſeem for a time to withſtand its operations. And I am the more inclined to entertain theſe ſentiments, becauſe the oppoſition of that people is ſo far from being pure and original, and ſpringing ſolely from themſelves, that it is a notorious and indiſputable fact, that ſince the Repeal of the Stamp Act, many of the Letter-writers and Correſpondents of the Coloniſts on this ſide of the water have, from time to time, given them the moſt ſanguine expectations that every bone of contention would be aſſuredly removed, if they continued firm and inflexible in their reſiſtance of our public meaſures; and I am warranted to ſay, (what no man in truth can poſſibly gainſay) that numbers of people in this Coun-

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try have not only exhorted them to oppoſe us, but even aided, comforted, and afforded them pernicious leſſons of advice, how they might moſt effectually and ſubſtantially reſiſt us. Thus emboldened and encouraged, warmed and ſpirited by inſenſible degrees, flattered by vain hopes, and lulled into ſecurity by falſe gloſſes and vain ſophiſtications, it is no matter of wonder that they have yielded to the ſyren tongues of theſe enchanters, and embraced a plan of oppoſition far beyond their primitive wiſhes or ideas.

But what ſhall be ſaid to ſuch unnatural aiders and abettors? Is it any mitigation of their offence to ſuggeſt, that they have been led to do ſo by the allurements of private gain, or the temptations of profitable commerce? Or have theſe baits been thrown out to obtain a breathing-time, and to give them an opportunity to contract their views in that Country, and to draw from thence the balances of Trade? It is ten to one, but ſome ſuch motives have influenced their conduct. And as, on the one hand, we are glad to find ſome excuſe for the deluded Coloniſts, we cannot too much deſpiſe the ſelfiſh machinations of intereſted men, and their parricidial deſigns againſt this Nation, as a great commercial State, on the other.

Let ſuch people examine their Letter-books; let them *commune in their own hearts, and*

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be ſtill; and let them in ſecret reflect what a flame they have kindled, and how they have alienated the minds of thoſe whom it was their duty to appeaſe and ſoften, conciliate and, if poſſible, attune; and they muſt ſtrike their penſive boſoms in a fit of contrary and contending paſſions, and inſtead of repining at the temporary evils which may ariſe to them in ſettling a diſpute fomented by themſelves, they will mildly and temperately bear preſent inconveniencies, whilſt they aid his Majeſty's Councils in ſupporting the juſt rights of his Empire, and maintaining its exiſtence as a State.

No matter from what cauſes evils do ariſe, or whether they can be reſolved into ignorance or low deſign; but when they happen from any cauſe whatever, it is incumbent upon the authors of them to offer up, at leaſt, a ſin-offering, and to ſtrengthen thoſe hands which before they had unduly weakened or reſtrained.

THEY have a good and ſufficient reaſon at hand to ſpare their cenſures of Adminiſtration, when they call to mind that they have thus ſecretly and inſidiouſly counteracted thoſe meaſures which the wiſdom of the Nation judged fit in maintenance of their dignity and honour.

MATTERS are now brought into that unhappy ſituation, that the honeſt induſtry and applica-

tion of every true lover of his Country are required to bind, if poſſible, the wounds of our illuſtrious Empire. And for that purpoſe we ſhould diſclaim all party connexion; ſtifle, if poſſible, the calls of intereſt, too apt to ſeduce us into error; forget, if we can, former prejudices, which, when they once faſten on the mind, lead it far from its proper courſe: And we are moſt eſpecially called upon at this juncture (if the love of the State at large bears any rule in our hearts) to aid and aſſiſt our gracious Sovereign (who can have no intereſt inſeparable from ours), in healing this dreadful breach, and at the ſame time ſaving the reſpect due to us as Head of the Britiſh Empire, and in bringing back our untoward Children to a becoming ſenſe of dutiful obedience; whereby the ſubjects of both countries may enjoy thoſe manifold and mutual benefits which were originally in idea, upon the firſt eſtabliſhment of Colonies in that diſtant quarter of the world.

THIS Nation has been too long unhappily divided, though for ſome time paſt certain gleams of hope have broke forth, which threaten the Empire of Faction with a downfal, and portend the full reſtoration of the Empire of Reaſon. This is not a time for divided counſels; and nothing but unanimity and quick diſpatch can ſave our bleeding State.

We are alſo paſt the æra of ſmooth compliments and kind conceſſions: We know the fruits we have hitherto reaped, and from their taſte and reliſh have little reaſon to be pleaſed with either.

It is too late to deplore that ſuch a queſtion of Right has ever been moved or aſſerted; and to look back to circumſtances which, inſtead of adminiſtering relief, only tend ſtill further to puzzle and inthrall us, is an idle and unprofitable waſte of time.

What remains now to be done, is to eſtabliſh a wiſe and ſolid plan of Government, founded upon great Commercial Principles, whereby the true policy of the Navigation Act may be ſtill further advanced, our Engliſh Plantation Trade reſerved to this Nation, and their firm dependance on the Parent State effectually ſecured. When the Colonies encourage and encreaſe our ſhipping, maintain a good correſpondence and kindneſs with us, and keep in a firm dependance upon us; when they give a free and uninterrupted vent to our manufactures and commodities, render our navigation more ſafe and cheap, by making this Kingdom a ſtaple not only of the commodities of the Plantations, but alſo of the commodities of other Countries and places for the ſupplying of them; then do they nobly anſwer the wiſe ends and purpoſes of

the ſeveral Acts of Navigation, and the evident intention of this Kingdom in the eſtabliſhment of Engliſh Plantations. But if theſe deſigns are fruſtrated, or any thing is innovated which may interfere with theſe general and comprehenſive views, Colonies become a *ſcourge*, inſtead of a bleſſing, to the Parent State. It has been well obſerved by a Writer on Trade, many years ago, "That Colonies are a ſtrength to their Mother "Country, while they are ſtrictly made to ob- "ſerve the fundamental laws of their original "Country, and while they are kept dependent "on it; but otherwiſe, they are worſe than "Members lopped from the Body Politic; being "like offenſive arms, wreſted from a nation to "be turned againſt it, as occaſion ſhall ſerve."

THERE cannot, then, remain a ſingle doubt, but the looſe ſituation of things in our American Colonies requires a ſpeedy reformation, and demands the full exertion of the Legiſlature of this Kingdom to remedy ſubſiſting evils before they grow rooted and confirmed, by bringing the Coloniſts into ſo good and ſound a ſtate, that every part of thoſe diſtant territories may enjoy its due proportion of nutriment, and thereby be fitted and diſpoſed to promote the intereſt, honour, and dignity of Great Britain, their Head, Mother, and Protectreſs.

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The reſources of this Nation are many and various, and the ways whereby we may vindicate ourſelves are both obvious and numerous; but I forbear to point out plans, and modes or forms of doing things, theſe being points of public buſineſs which private men, who ſee not the finer movements of the Political Machine, cannot ſo properly determine.

It is, no doubt, a matter of infinite regret, and muſt give pain and anguiſh to a tender mind, when admonition and forbearance prove too feeble to effect a cure. But wiſe men know, that violent remedies muſt ſometimes be applied to obſtinate diſeaſes. In the two grand Rebellions of 1715 and 1745, we were cruelly compelled to put to the ſword, and bring to condign puniſhment, our deluded fellow-ſubjects, born and bred on the ſame Iſland with ourſelves, and connected by a thouſand ties of intereſt, blood, and friendſhip, with the beſt people in the land. Rivers of tears flowed down many an honeſt cheek; grey hairs were brought with ſorrow to the grave; and the hearts of men, though troubled and afflicted, patiently ſubmitted, and acknowledged that Severity was Juſtice.

For my own part, I think it far more honourable for this Nation to run even the riſque

riſque of loſing her Colonies in aſſerting her juſt Rights (an event little to be dreaded !) than to retain them on baſe and ignoble terms. This Kingdom holds nothing under a weak, conteſted title: there is not a ſingle ray that adorns the Imperial Crown of England, but what has been obtained by the nobleſt kind of purchaſe. We enjoy no caſual advantages under grace and favour. The ſpirit and ſwords of our anceſtors have made us the terror of Nations; and it will be a prodigy indeed, if their poſterity ſhould crouch and tamely yield to thoſe who owe this Kingdom allegiance and dutiful ſubmiſſion.

The Romans ſo well tempered their laws and regulations, that whilſt they made their Colonies uſeful in a commercial view to the Commonwealth at large, they took care at the ſame time to ſecure the reverence and reſpect of the Colonies to their Mother City. And hence it was that they afforded ſuch noble and generous ſupport to the Roman State, when they were exhauſted, ſunk, and almoſt deſponding under the preſſure of diſaſters, diſappointments, and loſſes, in the ſecond Punick War.

What I have urged in this Letter, is on a ſuppoſition that the Colonies mean to perſiſt in their unnatural oppoſition to the laws and regu-

regulations of the Parent-State. But if the Colonies ſhould ſpeedily diſcover ſymptoms of contrition, and adopt ſome temperate and cautious maxims, whereby any opening may be given to this Country to ſtrike out a plan that may ſave its own honour, and at the ſame time prevent effuſion of blood; I moſt ſincerely wiſh that the *ultima ratio Regum* may be wholly laid aſide.

I SHALL conclude this long but intereſting Letter with the advice of Cardinal Richlieu to Lewis XIII. "After having ſpoken of "the divers Orders the State is compoſed of, "I have but little to ſay in the main, but "that, as the whole only ſubſiſts by the "union of its parts in their order and natu-"ral ſituation; ſo this great Kingdom can "never flouriſh, unleſs your Majeſty takes "care to keep the Bodies which compoſe it "in their order.—As it is moſt certain, "(adds he) that the elements which are ca-"pable of weight, have none when they are "in their place; ſo it is certain, that none "of the Orders of your State will prove bur-"thenſome to the other, while each doth re-"main in the place which its birth hath "aſſigned."

I am, dear Sir,

Your moſt Obedient Servant.

London,
Nov. 28, 1774.